



## CHECKLIST FOR FOOD SERVICE OPERATORS

*There are two primary types of foodborne illnesses; bacterial and viral. The safety controls for each are very different.*

*The safety controls for bacterial illnesses are all about controlling the growth of bacteria in foods; temperature and time. Cooking, cooling, hot hold, cold hold, reheating, and cross contamination are key factors in bacterial growth.*

*There are 3 safety controls for viral illnesses. First viruses are spread through food primarily by fecal/oral contamination. So the first safety control is effective hand washing. The second is the two part employee health policy; reporting and restriction/exclusion. The third, probably the easiest to ensure no virus is making it through to food, is the 'no bare hand' contact with any food that is done being cooked or a food that won't be cooked.*

1. All cold foods are to be kept at 41F or less.
2. All hot foods are to be kept at 135 or higher.
3. Avoid keeping foods in the "danger zone" temperature range, from 41 to 135F, bacteria will grow much more rapidly.
4. Be sure that foods are always cooked thoroughly. In consideration of E. Coli be especially careful in cooking ground meats.
5. When cooling hot foods, they should reach 70F within 2 hours and then down to 41F or less within another 4 hours. (So using ice, stirring, and/or shallow pans may be required to reach these temperatures within the proper time.)

6. Crockpots and steam tables are not designed to heat cold foods as they are typically capable of heating foods rapidly. So foods should be heated rapidly to 165F on stove or in microwave and then hot held at a minimum of 135F.
7. Soap and paper towels should always be available at all hand wash facilities.
8. Safe thawing is not done at room temperature but done in a refrigerator, under cold running water, or in a microwave if the food is to be cooked immediately after thawing.
9. Personal hygiene of food handlers is very important in offering safe foods. Educate and lead by example.
10. Cloth wiping towels have been found to be a very common source of cross contamination in restaurants. So establish sanitizer baths to store the towels between uses. This will kill anything on the towel and it will sanitize the surfaces wiped.
11. Believe it or not there have been illnesses traced to ice. So follow manufactures cleaning recommendations of ice machines, don't handle ice with bare hands, store ice scoops in a protected manner, and don't store anything in drink ice.
12. Be sure to use chemical test strips for sanitizer baths and chemical dishwashers. Use thermolabels to ensure that the proper surface temperature of utensils in hot water sanitizing are reached. (Minimum of 160F surface temp and usually water is 180-195F to accomplish this)
13. Use metal stem thermometers to monitor cooking temperatures, cold hold, hot hold, reheating, and cooling of foods.
14. Calibrate metal stem thermometers regularly.
15. Persons with open wounds, cuts, or burns should not handle foods unless

they have bandage and tight fitting glove over wound.

16. All utensils must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized either in a commercial dishwasher or manually in a 3 compartment sink.
17. No bare hand contact with foods cooked or ready to eat. Use tongs, patty paper, gloves, or dispensing devices.
18. Potentially hazardous foods in refrigeration for more than 24 hours should be date marked to ensure that these foods are used or discarded within 7 days.
19. Store chemicals and cleaning supplies below or away from any food, food equipment, or processing areas.
20. Store raw meats below or away from any cooked or ready to eat foods in case they drip or spill.
21. If you serve raw or undercooked
22. Meats, fish, or poultry products post consumer advisory. *Example: When eating at home or dining out consuming fully cooked meats, eggs, or fish reduces the chance of foodborne illness.*
23. Implement the 2 part employee health policy. Food handlers are required to report symptoms/conditions listed and then the person in charge makes an informed decision to exclude or restrict.

For copies of codes, applications, or other materials visit St. Croix County Health and Human Services-Public Health's agent program at:

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